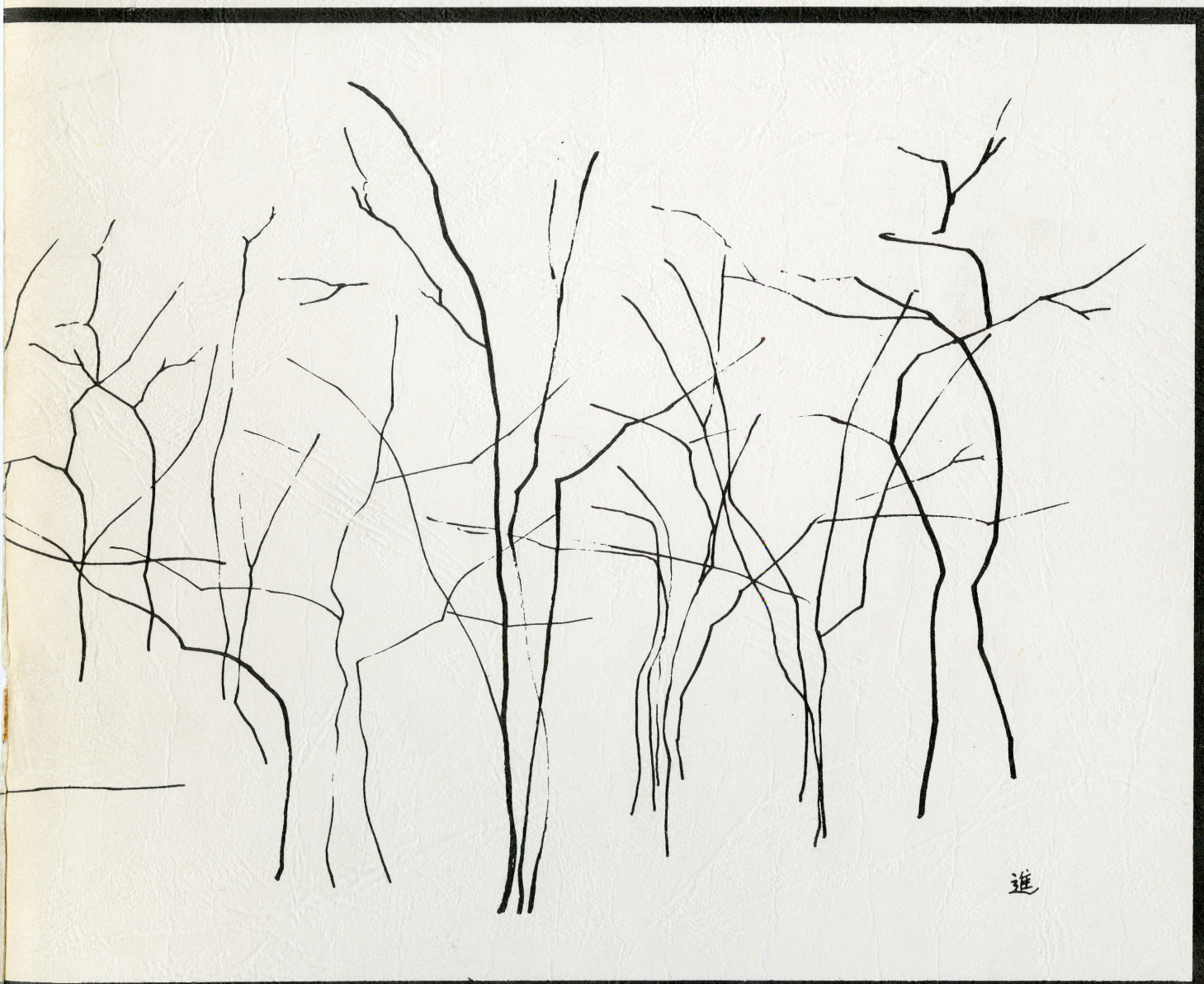


auburn

review

SPRING 1969



進

Susumu Takeuchi

auburn

review

SPRING 1969

TO PRESENT A FORUM FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS...

Editors

Ronald David Williams
April Flowers

Faculty Advisers

Madison Jones
Carl Benson

Special thanks to those who made this edition a reality:

Dr. Sara Hudson, Janyce Hanson, Chuck Hanke, George Inzer,
John Welker, William Mason, and Jennie Granville.

This is a pilot edition published by the Auburn University Student Body. For such an endeavor to continue will depend upon the response of the Student Body. For information and comment, please contact the Board of Student Publications.



1 FLOWERS

Miss Pomeroy grew flowers. They covered almost half of her yard. Cannas, nasturtiums, zinnias, marigolds, chrysanthemums--all during the spring, summer, and early fall the flowers grew and bloomed. The people on our street said that she had been growing them for over twenty years, and they always came up as beautiful as ever. There seemed to be something eternal about her flowers. Even I sensed it, though I had only moved to her street the year before. And you know, it's funny: every time I think of Miss Pomeroy, I never can remember her face--only masses of flowers that seem to be everywhere at once and yet are really nowhere.

We moved to our house on Boylston Street in the fall of 1930. I was twelve then, and my brother Jamie was eight. We had moved to an older and smaller house to try to save some money. Things were hard for everyone during the Depression, but I suppose our family was luckier than most. Papa still had his job as schoolteacher, and even though schoolteachers didn't make much money, especially in Tennessee, we had enough to make ends meet. Jamie and I didn't mind wearing cardboard in the soles of our shoes. Everyone had to do it then, and we used to try to see whose cardboard would last the longest before the rain soaked holes in it or the rocks tore it to shreds. And if we caught cold in the winter, Mama would let us stay home from school for a day and would make us some of her hot mushroom soup. It was great fun.

Papa grew the mushrooms in the cellar during his spare time. The shallow crates covered most of the dirt floor. I loved to sit in the moist darkness and breathe their musty fragrance. "Yes, sir," Papa would say, "there is nothing like a good mushroom to perk up a man's appetite." I agreed with him. Mushrooms were one of my favorite foods. But sometimes even I grew rather tired of them after eating them every day for a week. People used to buy boxes of them from us before the Depression, but now they could hardly afford to buy bread for the table, let alone such a luxury as mushrooms. I felt rather smug each time I popped a big, juicy one into my mouth. But Papa gave many of them away.

I got a job that winter tending Miss Pomeroy's furnace. I suppose she would have cared for it herself if she had been able to, because our other neighbors had informed us that she did not like having any people around. But she was getting along in years; she must have been in her late sixties, I guess. So every morning I would get up at five o'clock, pull on my knickers and jacket, and run shivering across the street to bank her furnace. I never saw her at all during the week. I would let myself in through the cellar door, fix her fire, and then leave. Every Friday I went to collect my dollar, and she would say, "Thank you, Douglas." That was all. She was a strange woman.

Even Mama thought she was odd, and Mama was the type of woman who could get along with anyone. After we had been living at Boylston Street for a couple of weeks, Mama paid her a visit. "She is a strange woman,"

Mama said that night at the supper table. We knew then that there must be something funny about Miss Pomeroy for, to Mama, no one was odd; she just accepted each person as he was and tried to find the best in him.

"She didn't say one word about anything but her flowers," said Mama. "From the way she talks, they must be really beautiful. I can't wait to see them this spring. You know, Herbert," she said, turning to Papa, "maybe she will give me a few of her shoots. It would be nice to have some flowers in our yard," she said wistfully. There was nothing in our yard except a few patches of drying grass. There wasn't even any shrubs or trees.

That spring Miss Pomeroy's flowers began to bloom, and I saw that, indeed, there was something special about them. Each bud seemed to have a life of its own, and Miss Pomeroy tended them as carefully as if they were people instead of simply plants. I was cutting her grass then, and over and over she admonished me not to go near her flowers.

"You have been hired to cut the grass, Douglas," she said, her old eyes flashing with anger at the mere thought of my even touching a flower. "You are not to come near the flowers, do you understand? I will trim around the flowers myself."

Good grief, she made me feel like an idiot! Inside I was seething with indignation, but I meekly hung my head and said, "Yes, ma'am." A dollar a week was a lot of money then.

I griped to Jamie about it. He was nice little kid, and he was always sympathetic. "You ought to cut down her stupid old flowers," he said. I nodded my head solemnly and said, "Yeah, I ought to," but I knew that I never could do that. I did, though, pick a few of them on the sly. But not very many for I could always sense her grim old eyes boring into me. Imagination, probably, but it made me uneasy. Afterwards, I would go throw them in the ditch and feel ashamed.

In May, Mama visited Miss Pomeroy and took her a box of fresh mushrooms. I wondered if she would bring some of Miss Pomeroy's flowers back with her. It would be nice to have some of her flowers in our house.

When she came back, Mama seemed troubled. She didn't have any flowers with her either. "You must be very careful with Miss Pomeroy's flowers, Douglas," she told me seriously. "They are all that she has."

"You mean that she wouldn't give you any of her flowers, Mama?" I asked.

"She will never give anyone any of her flowers, Doug," Mama said. "Do you know what she said? She said, 'My flowers are my children. I could never give them away.'" Mama had a far-off look in her eyes, and she seemed to be talking to herself. "I told her that she could make a lot of money if she tried to sell them. And they would bring so many people pleasure if she would only share them. A person can't live without friends, Doug!" She turned to me, seeming to forget that I was twelve years old. "Can't she see how wrong she is? What will happen if the flowers go? She has nothing else."

I didn't know what to do so I just stood there looking miserable. I had never seen Mama upset before. I wished that I could bring her a whole armful of flowers. Maybe that would make her feel better.

Summer passed, and I forgot about Miss Pomeroy and her flowers. I still cut her grass every week and collected my money from her each Friday, but I paid scant attention to her flowers. Sometimes when I would be out playing ball with Jamie, I would see her working with her flowers and talking to herself--or to them, I don't know which. "She sure is a crazy old lady," I would say to Jamie. And he would agree.

Late in September, when the leaves were beginning to turn red and gold, Jamie and I were faced with a problem. Mama's birthday was coming up, and we had nothing to give her.

"What do you suppose she would like?" Jamie asked me.

I thought for a minute, and then I said, "I know what she would really like. Some flowers."

"But where are we going to get any flowers?" Jamie asked.

I looked at him for a minute and then he looked at me, and we reached an unspoken agreement.

"Do you think it's all right?" Jamie asked me as we tiptoed across the street early the next morning. "I mean, it really is stealing, isn't it?"

"Well, not really," I said thoughtfully. "Just look at all the mushrooms we've given her. And besides, her flowers will be dead in a few weeks. So what difference does it make?"

"I guess you're right," Jamie said slowly.

"Sure!" I expanded. "Just think how happy Mama will be. And that crazy old Miss Pomeroy has so many flowers that she won't even miss a few."

"Yeah!" said Jamie stoutly, but I could tell that he was afraid.

We were hesitant about picking them at first, but our confidence grew as we moved among the flowers.

"Hey, Doug, here's a pretty one. Do you think she'd like this one?"

"Yes, might as well get it. But don't be so loud! They can probably hear you all over the street."

We tiptoed through the yard, laughing softly and whispering to each other until our arms were full.

"Hey, Doug," said Jamie, "I guess we really pulled a good one on the old lady, didn't we?"

And then he turned around.

Miss Pomeroy was standing on the porch with her arms folded. Her hair was up in kid curlers and she had on an old brown dressing gown. She looked terrible.

"What are you doing with my flowers," she said to Jamie in an ominous voice.

Jamie dropped the flowers and just stood there. I don't think she even noticed me.

"Don't you touch my flowers!" she yelled. Jamie still just stood there. He was too scared to move.

Miss Pomeroy grabbed onto Jamie and shook his arms. "You stay away from my flowers," she said, her voice shaking with rage. "Don't you ever come near here again."

Jamie started crying, and I could feel myself getting angry.

"You let go of my brother!" I shouted at her. "You're just a stupid old woman who doesn't have any friends at all. I hate you!" I could not stop trembling, and I felt the tears starting to form in my eyes.

"I hope all your flowers die," I yelled. "All we wanted was a few of your lousy flowers. I hope they all die, and I hope you die, too! No one will miss you."

I saw the shocked expression on her face, and I was glad that I had hurt her.

"Come on, Jamie," I said, and started running. Somehow I just couldn't stop running until I got to the corner of the block. I had to wait for Jamie to catch up with me. He was still crying, and I was too. Miss Pomeroy was still standing there in her yard. I looked down at the bunch of flowers clutched in my hand, then I looked back at Miss Pomeroy. I felt awful. I let the flowers fall at my feet and stood there staring at them for a long time.

That night it turned cold. Jamie and I slept under a big quilted coverlet and huddled together to keep warm. The next morning the ground was covered with one of those freak frosts which signals the advent of winter even though there are still several weeks of warm weather before the cold really sets in.

"I don't suppose Miss Pomeroy will be wanting her grass cut this week, eh, Douglas?" Papa said over our breakfast of hot oatmeal and biscuits.

"No, I don't guess so," I mumbled, stirring my porridge around with my spoon.

"Going to be a hard winter by the look of things," Papa said conversationally. I didn't say anything but just thought about Miss Pomeroy.

After breakfast I pulled on a sweater and went outside. The ground crunched under my feet. Looking across the street, I could see Miss Pomeroy bending over her flowers. I really felt bad about yesterday. I shouldn't have said those things to her, I told myself.

I made myself go across the street, even though I didn't want to, even though I thought I would catch hell.

When I got to her yard she was still just standing there, all bent over her flowers. It was funny--I hadn't noticed how frail she was before.

I cleared my throat. "Miss Pomeroy," I began, but only a squeak came out. Her back was still turned to me, and she didn't seem to notice that I was there.

I looked at her flowers. The stems were all broken and the petals drooped. They looked cold and lonely.

"Miss Pomeroy," I said.

She turned and looked at me then, but she didn't seem to see me. There were tears in her eyes.

"My flowers... my beautiful flowers. They are all ruined," she said.

"Miss Pomeroy, I'm sorry about what I said yesterday. I really shouldn't have said it. I'm sorry." I paused. "And I'm sorry about your flowers."

She seemed to notice I was there then, and she looked at me again. "Douglas, Douglas, I'm a lonely old woman," she said.

I was miserable. I scratched at a pimple on my cheek and tried to think of something to say.

"My flowers," she repeated, fingering one of the bent stalks.

"They'll grow back again next spring," I said lamely.

"No, I don't think so," she said so softly that I had to bend to hear her. "My beautiful flowers are all dying. Winter will be here soon."

2 THERE WILL COME A DAY WHEN WE MUST PART

There will come a day when we must part,
When we no longer reach to touch the sun.
Our hearts, now close entwined, will break in two,
And each of us will go our separate way.
We cannot stay together, for we know
That both of us exist in different dreams;
My way of life is not, cannot be yours
No matter how I try to make it so.
I see our future with forbidden eyes
For oft have prophets told me not to look
Into the future, which brings only pain.
But who can close his eyes and just pretend
That pain does not exist, that life is good
And will be good until eternity?
Not I, though I have tried to see it so.
Instead, I see the passing of the days
In which each of us will be alone.
I see the sadness and the tears and pain
When spirits part and emptiness takes root.
So sing your song of joy to me, my love,
And touch me now, and hold me with your heart;
Let us be lovers for another day;
But hold me not too close, and beg me not
To stay with you forever, for I know
That someday we will have to break apart
And I will have to seek another sun.

3 THE HISTORY OF MY ROOM SHOWN BY CANDLE

Sitting near the warmth of my candle
My favorite fan cools me
Tonight is dark as decisions are made.
My search has again reached a pinnacle.
But will it last?
The wavering flame like a dangling string
Wondering in verse closed with sealing wax,
Shadows in my garbage can ask questions
I cannot answer, but I say, "yes."
And hypocrisy fills my ears.
Lying upon my low bed,
Writing words of unthought,
Trying to sleep to wake up tomorrow--
Will my candle drip?
The fan blade cuts the air.
Staring now into my candle
I see white and green liquid shadows,
A burned black wick slowly dying
Round on paper with an "I" missing.
Sex, a calendar, and Dylan.
A right trunk and an unright trunk,
Chairs red and white, one maimed,
Did the tickets change hands?
My clothes unhung need hanging,
What does my mirror reflect?
Plastic upon the floor we walk on
Seen in my candle light.
Dirty towels and a clean me;
Mr. Clean is empty, will Tide work?
To whom do I pray?
A trumpet's fanfare, a drum cadenza,
Not waking I am awake.
The waves do not end, they roll.
My dirty gold bedspread covers me,
We need curtains to cover the windows.
Flicker flame eat away my happiness;
After you are gone everything grows cold.
Pictures of love on my wall
Take what you want, the world is mine,
The wall needs painting, don't they?
Buy a new candle. It is inevitable.
Inevitable or is this the last time?
Are matches gone?
The light penetrates deeper

I still don't see myself.
 Which is faster, the inside or outside of a circle?
 I see dark softness
 May it be mine forever?
 Crowds cheering, laughing, clapping, hoping.
 I am alone with each of them,
 Robins are gone except those that can't fly,
 I hope they will live. I like them.
 They aren't troubled, or are they?
 The history of my room shown by candle.
 The window is open letting cold air enter.
 Shades are brutal to sunlight.
 The soft glow of an autumn moon.
 Sitting together on a wooden bench
 I feel the softness of my pillow
 In the warmth of my candlelight
 On the firmness of my bed.
 What am I doing in the hotel ballroom
 These are my friends,
 Magic dragons, I saw two today;
 Napalm bursting in my brain
 I love everyone and hate them all.
 My conscience bothers someone.
 My chair has four legs,
 A golden product of time,
 Finished early or late it matters not.
 Asking questions, final answers,
 The flickering flame of warm candlelight,
 All questions ask "why. "

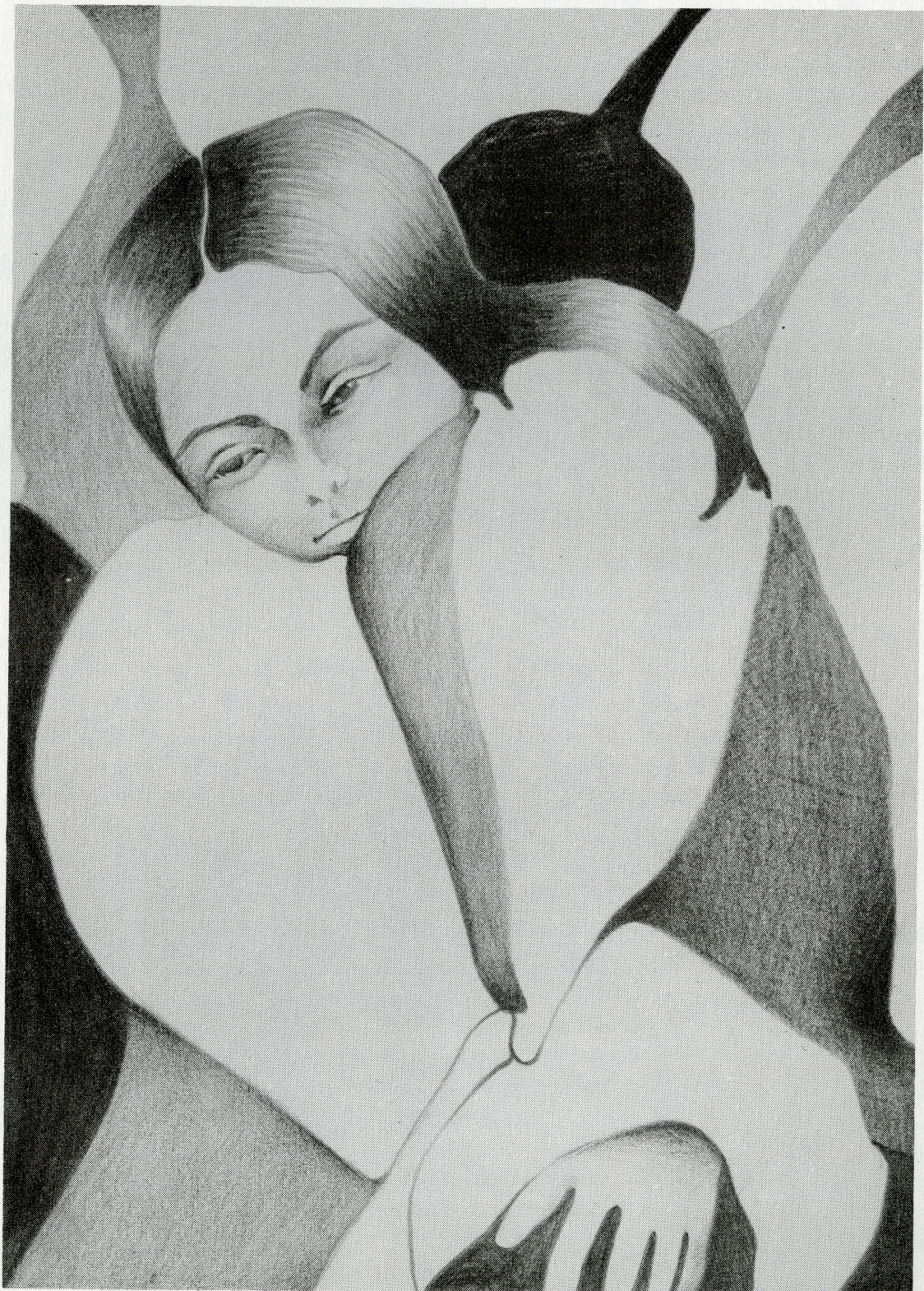
Nancy Antoine-

4 POEM

So many--
 alone
 So boisterous--
 silence

The tide swells, ebbs, disperses,
 And leaves its spume with the seaweed

As the lonely crowd marks me
 Although they never touch me, see me,
 heed my piteous cry for help
 Still they leave me scarred upon the beach



C. Cunningham

I am broken, empty--wanting only
a touch of one other than the
tall black shadow

Hear O Israel...

They're coming, the black shadows,
and I cannot run.

Can no one escape the lonely crowd?

Jennie Granville-

5 Words are limited,
Confining.
To cloak a thought,
A winged bird of the spirit,
In a garbled code
Of scratched symbols,
Is that form of destruction
Which often eats away the mind.

6 There is a tree
With branches spreading wide
It seems in search
Reaching toward the sky.
On second glance you stop--
The tree is dead.

7 The first snowflakes of winter
So fragile and frail.
In silver-white softness
They float through the air,
Each alone
Amidst the myriad.
Free
Yet slaves to the whimsy of the wind.
Falling to form a gossamer web
That melts to a muddy puddle.

Robbie Evans-

8 SEASHORE DAWNING

Early in the morning
The sad crying of the gulls,
Like poetry flung against the wind,
Falls to the grey rocks below.
The rocky shadows of
Spray-driven crabs scuttle into
Seaweed drying on the sand.

The waves, unbroken,
Slide up the beach
Reaching for my feet.
The deep green sound of the sea,
Rolling over and over,
Slips through my fingers,
Leaving them silently wet.

9 CLAIRVOYANCE

The preternatural descending of the dark
Coming extemporaneously at dusk
Seals in my soul, the fiber of my being;
Setting the stage for the seance of my Dreams,
Those counterfeit visions which are
The incarnation of the impotency of my desires--
The in-motion, technicolor farce
Of my ambitions.

In the crystal ball of my brain I see
My victories and defeats
All that is precious or fragrant
Or depraved or harsh to me.
These mental phantasms reach me
With little labor,
Gaining access to my very core;
Yet I, lying in the grip of their influence
Can never seem to reach them.

Gary Pitsenberger -

10 this place was white before i came
for it is inscribed on the columns
now the wind has sucked all the colour out
of me
still it is white

two columns
and i stand between them
a thousand years
i am a white statue between two columns
counting the winds as they whirl by
waiting a Coming
which never comes

a thousand years
until i must embryo return
to my mother the sea
and forget the dizzy years of whiteness
counting the winds

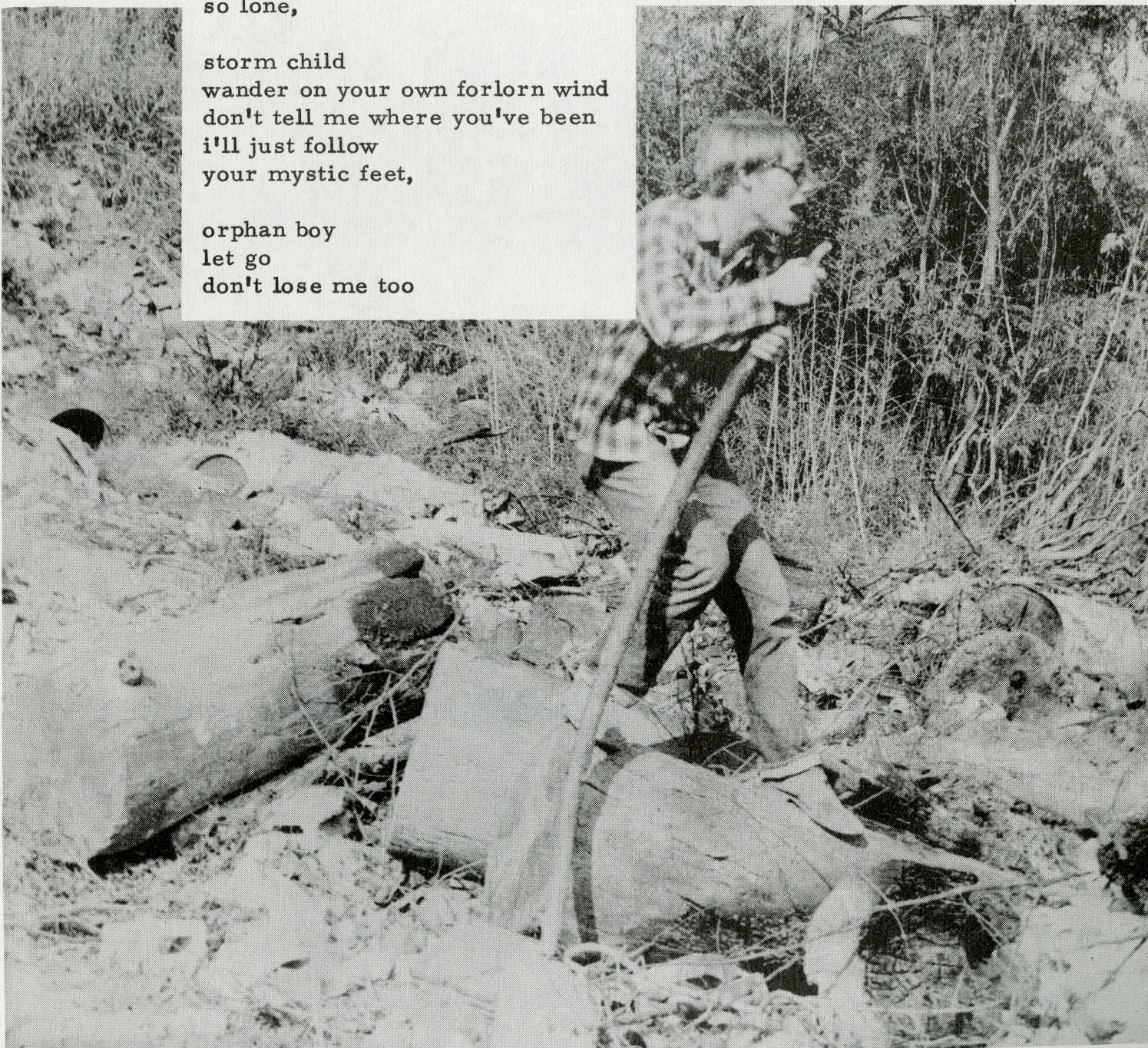


Wesley Swift

moon child
wind child
with nightclouds in your eyes,
witch child
with blackberry hair,
briar boy
tangled in my defenseless mind
dragging me through your smoky sky
pulling me into your whirly woods,
you're so lost
don't lose me too
in the night
so dark
so lone,

storm child
wander on your own forlorn wind
don't tell me where you've been
i'll just follow
your mystic feet,

orphan boy
let go
don't lose me too



April Flowers -

12 HAIKU

Harvest in the field
Wind-swept birds above the hill
Signature of fall

Shivering silken web
Stretched across my garden path
Startled by a breeze

Early morning rain
Makes pearl green the forest trees
And silent balls of birds

Sky yellow blossoms
Form streaking strands of sunlight
A forsythia

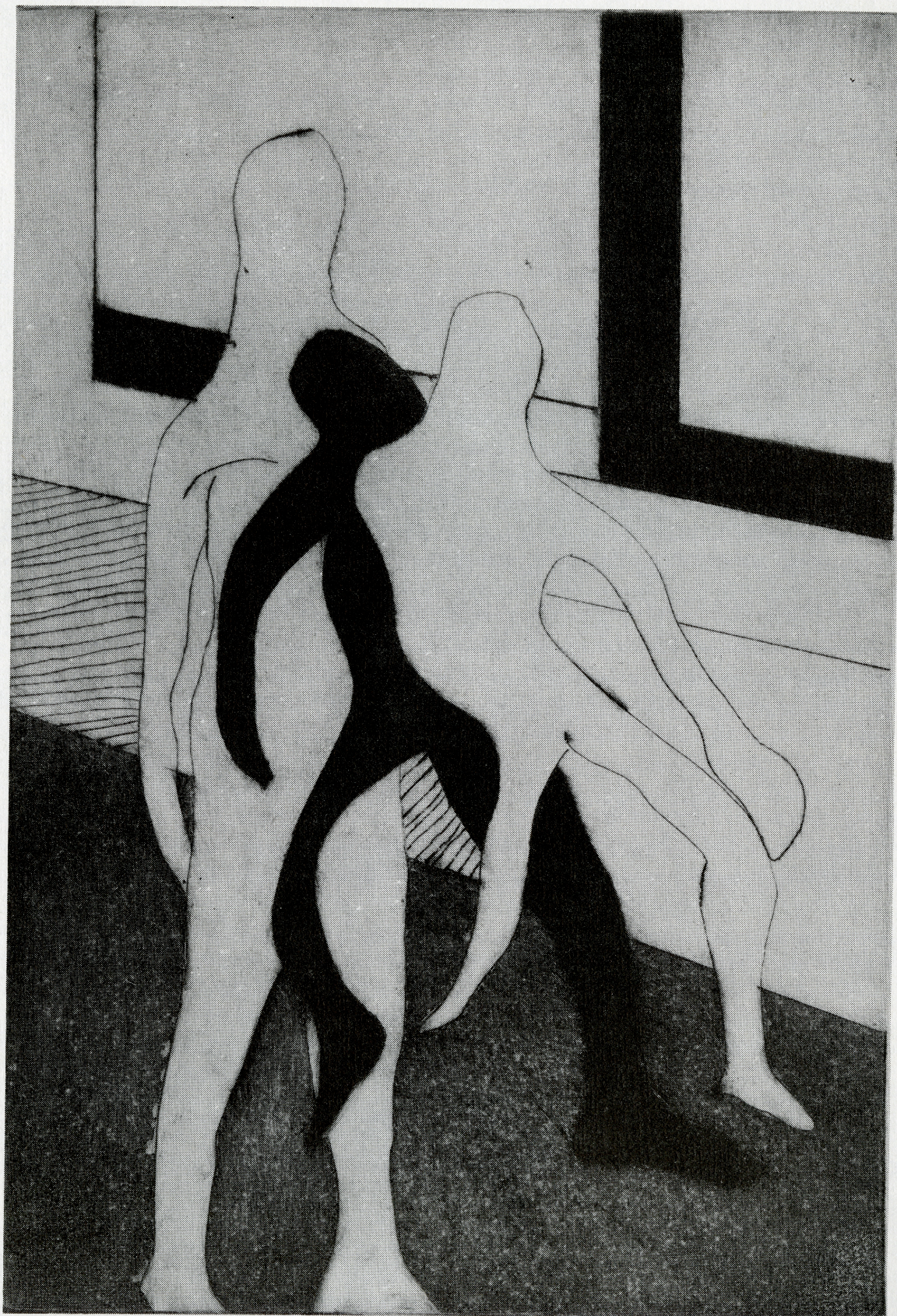
A willow arching
A stream pulsing through soft grass
Meadow that I know

Confusion is a web
Begun and ended
A whole lost to its form

Change is time and time is
The heartbeat of life
Recorded in man's soul

13 I AM

God has in me no gleaming marble
Rippling with the stuff of life
Rather sandstone
Slipping through His fingers to the dust
To form somewhere again
Rebellious rock



"Servitude"

Deon

14 AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY

Harvey is dead. I mean, I always thought it was supposed to be a big deal when a close relative passed away; but to be perfectly honest, it hasn't really bothered me. I was sorry as hell to hear he was in critical condition after the car wreck; and I'll admit when I got the phone call it really shocked me, but now, and even during the funeral, I didn't walk around thinking, Harvey's dead. Want to know something else? I don't think anyone else went around thinking that either.

Harvey was my uncle by marriage and he was fat--short and fat with big round eyes--and when he and my aunt and cousins came to visit they would eat too much. Daddy used to raise hell after they left. It wouldn't have been so bad, but they would stay at our house, and then go off to the Country Club with these creepy friends of theirs to drink and play bridge, and never really visit with mom and dad.

Harvey didn't keep any job long. He was a salesman and every time I heard about him, he was working for a different company. He was always asking friends for jobs; and once, I think, daddy even got him one. My aunt had a good job, however, and apparently they had money because they lived in a good neighborhood, had two cars, ate steak on the weekends, and every so often "got away from it all" by going to Florida.

Harvey and my aunt grew up in a small town, were childhood sweethearts, got married and had two children; and then one day when he was forty-some odd years old, Harvey got drunk, left work, and drove his car into a telephone pole on the far side of town. I remember it was the far side of town because I drove my aunt to the hospital to see him while he was in Intensive Care, about a week before he died; and she commented on how she wished he had "done it" on their side of town so he would have been taken to the closer hospital. Mother sat up at the waiting room for three days and nights, and was the last to see him alive. My aunt and cousins were too nervous and upset to stay with him. Anyway, mother was the last to see him alive because the doctors told her he was improving and that he wanted to talk to someone. Harvey told her to get his wife and get him out of the hospital because no one would believe what the nurses and doctors were doing to him, and that they were going to kill him. Mom called my aunt and told her. The doctors said he had the D. T.'s and was getting better, so mom left for home and Harvey died.

Harvey Smith's funeral will be held Sunday afternoon at 3:00 p. m. Mr. Smith was killed in an automobile accident and is survived by his wife and two daughters. Our sincerest sympathy goes out to the family of the deceased.

Harvey Smith's oldest daughter was the exact reproduction of Harvey, right down to the way they both walked. Some of the neighbors who had brought the covered dishes of food found it odd that she showed so little grief. She and Harvey had been very close. Many, in fact, stated how odd her entire personality seemed on the day of the funeral. She fairly flaunted from one group of people to the next, stopping to pick at the food or to pat a child's head. In fact, as one of the neighbors put it, "she seemed to be in a daze." Her actions were animated, her talk a little too slow, and her eyes seemed a little too bleary. It was disquieting to see her tilt back her head and smile with her mouth, but not with her eyes, like father always did when he seemed to be amused or was trying to sell a washing machine.

Later, at the funeral parlor, when her first cousin refused to go view the body, not because he was afraid, but because he wanted to remember Harvey as the short, fat man with multi-chins who would sneak drinks from his bottle and keep him up late talking about making money, Harvey's daughter sympathized, saying, "That's not my father in there. That's just someone they've fixed up. That's not my daddy."

Harvey's wife smoked one cigarette after another and cried the whole day until after the services. She talked constantly and softly with friends and relatives, stopping only to break into sobs--talking always about Harvey.

In the funeral home before the casket was closed for the last time, the widow flung herself on the waxen shell and cried passionate tears. She lamented her lost love, and wailing over sobs, cried how she would miss him. She warned all her sisters that they should love their husbands because some day their men would be gone also.

This show of unbearable grief, bordering almost on hysteria, was finally soothed by the widow's mother, who had layed three husbands in the earth, and the matron of the parlor, who had compassionately brought in a box of tissues. Only two minor matters really marked the day's proceedings, which moved with Gothic perfection. First, an issue was raised by the widow about hats being worn by some relatives; and secondly, Harvey's mother had wanted him buried in his home town. It was noted by one or two of the neighbors that Harvey's mother was cool toward the whole day's proceedings; and none of these friends of the family could remember her dropping a tear. The funeral procession was long however, and many late model cars were in it. The grave side service was all that was held, and it was short and to the point. The preacher's eulogy was pleasing to everyone. Everyone commented later on how they were doing okay until the reverend mentioned how Harvey loved the little children and how they loved him; they everyone began sobbing. Harvey's daughters took a flower apiece from the casket, the widow left with the undertaker, the people went home and a relative took pictures of the grave and flowers.

I remember how hot it was the day of the funeral and how glad I was our car had air conditioning. I mean it seems funny now, because I remember talking about how hot it was and about college and about how everyone was pleased that Harvey had such a nice view from his plot. but I can't, for the life of me, remember what the preacher said. I

don't think anyone else does either. I remember wondering what would happen if the preacher said the deceased had lived a wicked life and was going to hell. I bet you would remember that. I stood under the tent behind all the seated relatives. I had a pretty good view of everything. Anyway, all of a sudden all the women started sniffing and dabbing at the corners of their eyes in unison. If there's one thing I can't stand it's people crying around me, and I'll be damned if I didn't almost get choked up. It wasn't because I felt sad. I tried to feel sad by remembering all the times I had been with Harvey; but the only ones I could remember were happy times, so I didn't feel sad. Now, though, I remember times that weren't so happy.

Once when I stayed with Harvey and my aunt, they got in an argument and he said some nasty things and threw his fork in his plate and turned over his glass. Another time when he stayed with us because he got a better job in our town, I got blamed for some beer he had hidden in one of my bags; and once I drove him to Atlanta because he had lost his license. He really got on my nerves. I mean, I was trapped in the car with him and all he talked about was how I should go to Dayton with a bunch of boys; and how much money Army officers made because they could buy food at the PX and the government took care of them or something like that.

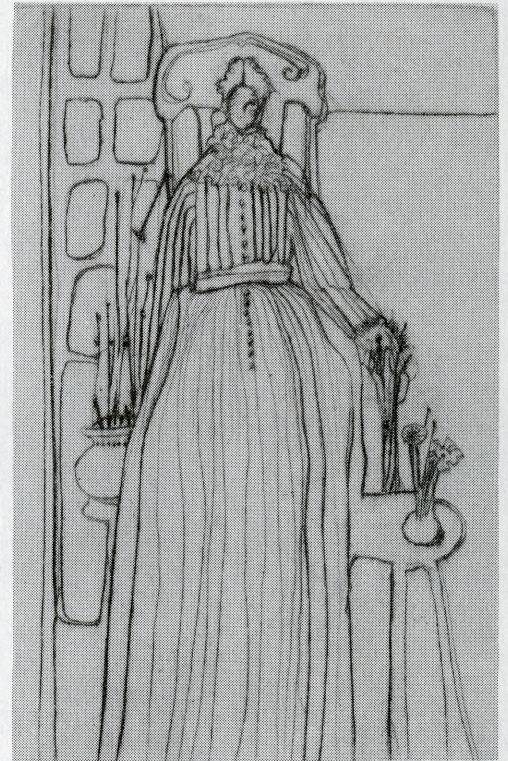
I didn't remember these times the day of the funeral, though. I guess that's how I really mourned for him. Anyway, I drove back to school soon after the funeral because Harvey's daughters were checking to see who had and hadn't sent flowers and daddy was going over the insurance papers with my widowed aunt. It was getting towards dusk and I got depressed looking at the shadows on the living room rug, so I made up an excuse about having to study. My aunt hugged me and said how much Harvey had loved me and told me to drive carefully and made me promise to come stay with her some weekends. She said she was going to be scared in the house now without a man around.

I've been back to see her a couple of times because she would call me and mother would make me go. Actually the visits weren't too bad. She's joined the Country Club and she makes me take money, saying that she can help me now and I may be able to help her later. She bought a new car and next month she's going to Europe.

Everyone talked her into going to Europe because she has the money now and they think the trip will do her good. Ever since the funeral she's had terrible dreams and has heard Harvey in the house calling to her. The week after his death she closed off his bedroom and gave away all his clothes. Once when I went to visit, she got me to get a pistol out of his closet for her to keep under her bed. She won't go in his bedroom.

15 WILLIE CUTTING ROSES

Willie finally left the blossoms
On the bush
And nonchalantly, on a Saturday,
Would pass it by--
Cutting a homogenous bouquet,
As if in honor of red non-cooperation.



Y. Smart

Willie wouldn't like it anymore,
Now that they've cut the red rose down--
(The only cared for spot ever allowed
To grace the weed-patch where the
 roses grew)
The only living thing as obstinate
As Willie was,
Is dead and gone.
And I suppose
The morning glories are gone, too.
I can't tell from the road.

16 ODYSSEY

We left the parkbench anchored in the shade,
And carefully not touching, moved past boxes
Barrels...the punctured backscreen doors
Of grim apartment houses spewing yellow light,
Your breath at my back...pushing...pushing...
Wafting me to the front past hardeyed
Dirtyundershirted neighbors.
Chairsful of sly eyes followed...followed...
Bored into our too-straight backs, our
Bones And hung upon the gleam
Of the one white finger...
Nod...Nod...Hello there...How
Are you...Nod...Nod...Nod back!
But still we swam...weaving in and out
In out in and out among dead trees,
Slowly, soundlessly...meandering through
The looming doors through the long
Hall brown long dust-washed
Doors leading into tributaries
Hot bulbs hanging down like bait.
Step by step landing by landing up the stairs
And switching off...we closed...lept into
The room Like salmon hurdling the final dike.
Stood leaning, trembling in a dusky pool,
And shuddered at a love too strong for honor

Martha McNeill-

17 LUNA

Soft-spoken as a swaying pine
The Luna Moth, lime and mellow,
Floated among the four o'clocks,
Sipping night-nectar and
Fluttering her eyelashes
At the passive moon.

Someone flicked a switch.

Then sudden sunlight of electric noon
Startled, Blinded, crazed her brain.
No more the shade of magnolia
Nor the shelter of sorority.

The incandescent bulb
Illuminated all--

And the pious wings of powder
Beat themselves to death
As scarlet screaming suffering
Glared in brilliant woe.

J. T. Nelson-

18 MEDITATION AT THE U. B.

IN THE RUSH AND NOISEFULL HUSTLE-CLANG
OF DISHES IN THE DISTANCE,
IN THE OVERWHELMING MELODY OF CONSCIOUSNESS,
THE ROUND REVERBERATION OF A HUNDRED STRINGS,
THE LURE OF PSYCHEDELIC LUTE ABANDONED TO THE WANTON
WILDNESS OF ELASTIC DREAMS,
IN THE HARMONY OF DISCORD,
DISJOINTING OVERTURES OF UNITY,
YOU FLOURISH: Weejun slippered,
 nylon-sheathed,
 --even free of freedom--
 christ's dogwood fastened through your ears,
 Gant labels nailed upon your back,
SO SURE IN CERTITUDE,
SO SLENDER, SINUOUS AND POISED,
SPIDER-HANDED, SMOOTH-CHEEKED COMPLACENCE,
AND TWO SETS OF CONTACT LENSES.

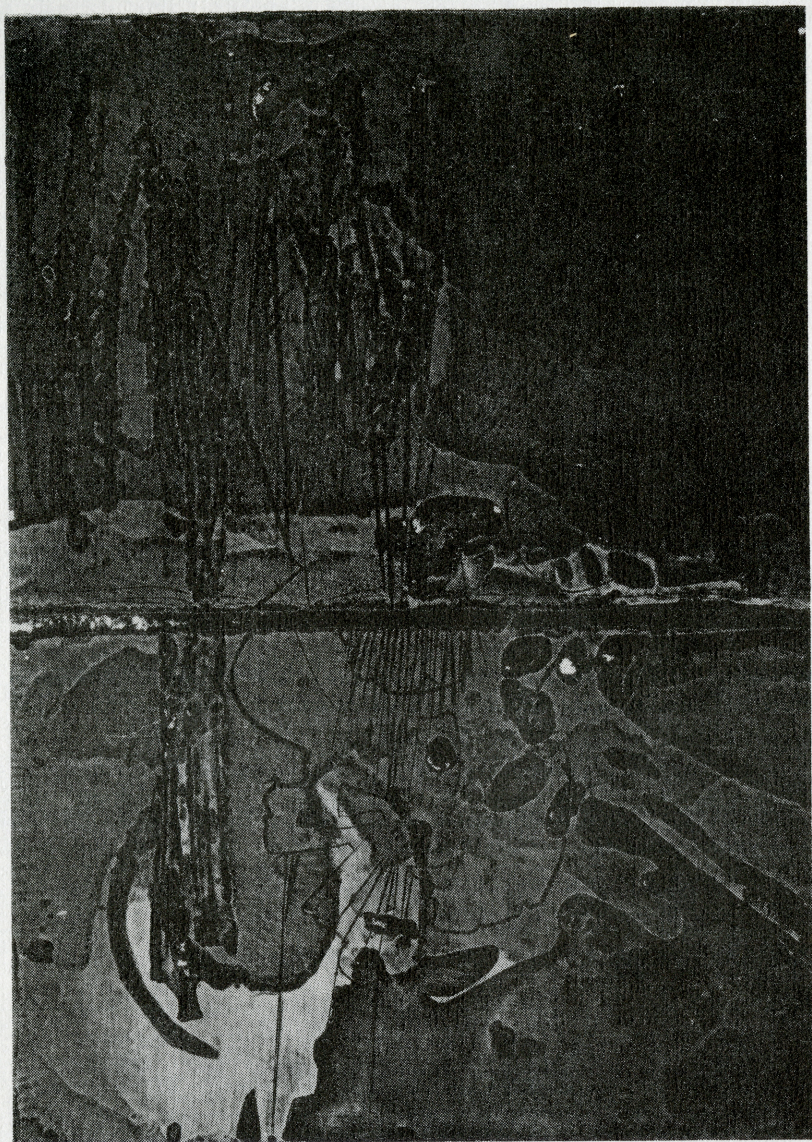
WHO WOULD KNOW

THAT EASING SERPENT-LIKE FROM WOMBS OF DARKNESS
THE LIGHT WILL BLEED YOU DRY-WHITE,
THAT YOU WILL SURELY SHED EACH SMALL ILLUSION
IN A SEPARATE AGONY OF DEATH
AND CLIMB IN SUBTLE WAYS
THE LADDER OF SULLEN MEDIOCRITY,
FINDING: a small bulge at your middle,
 a little thinness at your crown,
 perhaps a pair of reading glasses
 and a cane...

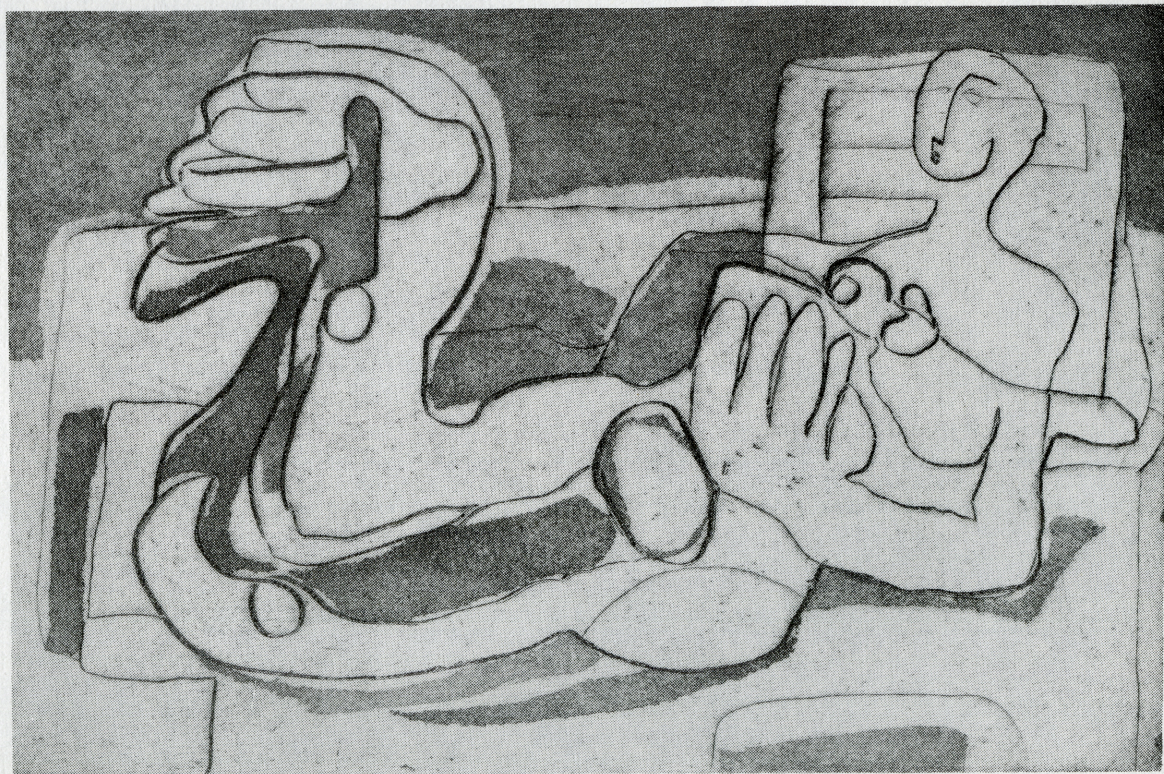
OH MY HALF-FLOWER CHILDREN!

I HOURLY MOURN YOUR DEATH.

WHAT WEAK PRETENSION IS THIS UNTESTED SHOW OF STRENGTH
BUT CERTAIN RUPTURE OF A THOUSAND COLORFUL BALLOONS?



Y. Smart "Night's Mostness"



Keith Ferris

19 THE HUNT

Then there was the cliff. Behind the pines, on the grassy hilltop, pastures stretched into green-black woods. Before me, the red-clayed face dropped down into the spring. From the water a frog croak swelled and resounded through the hollow in the hillside. In the woods, behind the spring, a squirrel leaped from one leafy limb to another; I didn't raise my gun. The bird calls and wing-beats pounded against my ears.

I wanted to forget. The squirrel, the gun, the leaves--but yet they remained. I sat and did not think, feeling the breeze against my face, drying my sweat.

When there are leaves and sun, you can't use dogs. I locked up old Tobo so he wouldn't follow me. His voice in a begging whine tried to persuade me to let him go. Fastening his collar to a chain, I turned my back and my deafened ears no longer heard his whimpers.

I put a few more shells in my worn hunting jacket and started out. As I walked across the dried, parched pastures, the weeds and grass bruised and pricked my legs through my pants; burrs and stickers caught in my clothes, scratched my flesh with every step. Though the early morning was cool under the trees, in the open field the sun chapped my face and my body sweated under the jacket.

My path took me across the pasture and up the gentle sloping side of the hill. "Ball Hill" they used to call it, at least so Toab, my grandfather's Negro always told me. "They's used to raise cotton," he'd say. But now my grandfather only lets the hill and field to a few goats which wander along the countless little trails they make. Often I have wondered where those little dirt lines lead to; whether they just go on and on forever or do lead to some certain place. But today I was hunting, not following goat-paths.

On the far side of the hill is the old gravel pit, and what is left of the sawmill. Standing at the edge, I looked down; beneath my feet the sheer wall descended to the hard barren floor. The hill had been clawed by some mammoth hand and the red clay glared against the grass covered fields and woods like the torn flesh of a wound. But a wound heals; the upturned hillside was just as barren as it was when my parents were children and watched the trucks remove the gravel.

I looked out at the miles of green that stretched on and on till they merged with the blue at the horizon. Besides the ghosts of past time at my feet, I was alone. Placing my gun back under my arm, I turned and traced a path to a gentle slope at the edge of the pit.

At the base of the hill directly opposite the one I ascended, is another thick wood. This was my destination. I entered the woods near the spring and began my wait.

Waiting--for a movement of leaves, a scrape of some bark, or a

dark fur scampering on the mat of dead leaves--I lifted the bolt. The shell entered the chamber. Click. The safety was on. I waited--like hunting, like fishing--like living. Still I waited. Birds teased me with their flutter and rustle in the leaves. My eyes carefully scanned every leaf, branch and tree in the green maze.

A brown fur stretched itself long and thin into a line and flew, caught and ran. Click. The safety was off, my barrel followed the movements of my eyes. The fur stopped, brought itself tight. I squeezed, but the animal-spring uncoiled. It fell, hit the ground, but still moved into the cumulated tangle of leaves.

It was up to me to find him, to finish the process I started. Between the squirrel and me was barb-wire fence. I laid the gun down, crawled under, and picked up the gun again refilling the clip.

I walked toward the bush. Nothing moved. I searched the leaves for the body; nothing lay there. I walked further, hit the bushes, the matted undergrowth and the piles of dry leaves, and stopped, listening and looking. My eyes caught it; my body tensed. Before me, not more than eight feet, the long, thin brownish-red streak lay twining and rolling inside its cold flesh toward me. I lowered the gun, pointed, fired; I threw back the bolt, fired again. Each spray of buckshot threw the copperhead into the air in a spasm of jerks. The body coiled and uncoiled as it fell back to the earth. But still it crawled. Not realizing how close I was, I was firing under the snake. A third shot put the snake beyond my sight, lost in the tangle of dead limbs and dried leaves. I turned. Hastily I walked back toward the fence and the security of the sun. I stopped above the spring looking back into the woods, catching my breath.

20 INDIAN SUMMER

Autumn loomed so near my life-worn soul.
Tears and blood-broken mind passed swift among
The coloured, slowly dying leaves. The cold,
The season's fatal change had sharply stung.
What strong hope could stop this fatal motion
To which the gods shall fall as mortal prey?
Or what brave thought could stop the earth's rotation
Or hold the fiercest stellar beasts at bay?
Resigned to lonely end I made my peace
With earth's and star's and season's onward sail
And waited like the aging, drying leaf
For destined end with winter's chilling gale.
But Indian summer, gracious love did lend,
And temporal hope drew me green again.

Jan Pitsenberger -

21 I want to leave this place
there is a life of magic I'm looking for
it's all of sand castles
and of reading a book
of learning something
by watching the wave lengths playing with the beach pebbles
grey skys
long pants
ragged over my feet
dragging through the saltwater
long saggy shirt
flowing hair stringy in the wind salt air
music sea gulls sweeping down wondering where I came from
they will know me in time
we'll walk together, the gulls and I
I'll wait a moment to watch a sand crab digging for safety
too bad he doesn't know
I won't hurt him



D. Moore

when the sun sleeps
I'll take with me a candle
when the cold wind whirls my body
I'll build a fire, my flaming torch in the night
the flames will die and I will watch as my friend leaves me
the cold wind will whirl my body again
I will have a dog
my dog will have me
together, we'll build a house on the hill
full of warm fluffy rugs clean and sweet smelling
of scented candles and fireplaces
hot tea from friendly mugs will soothe my salty throat
I'll take my guitar from the wall
and send music swirling with the smoke
my voice will be the wind
our fire will dance shadows on the wall
sleep will sneak upon us and gently leave when morning comes



Jack Smith

John Welker -

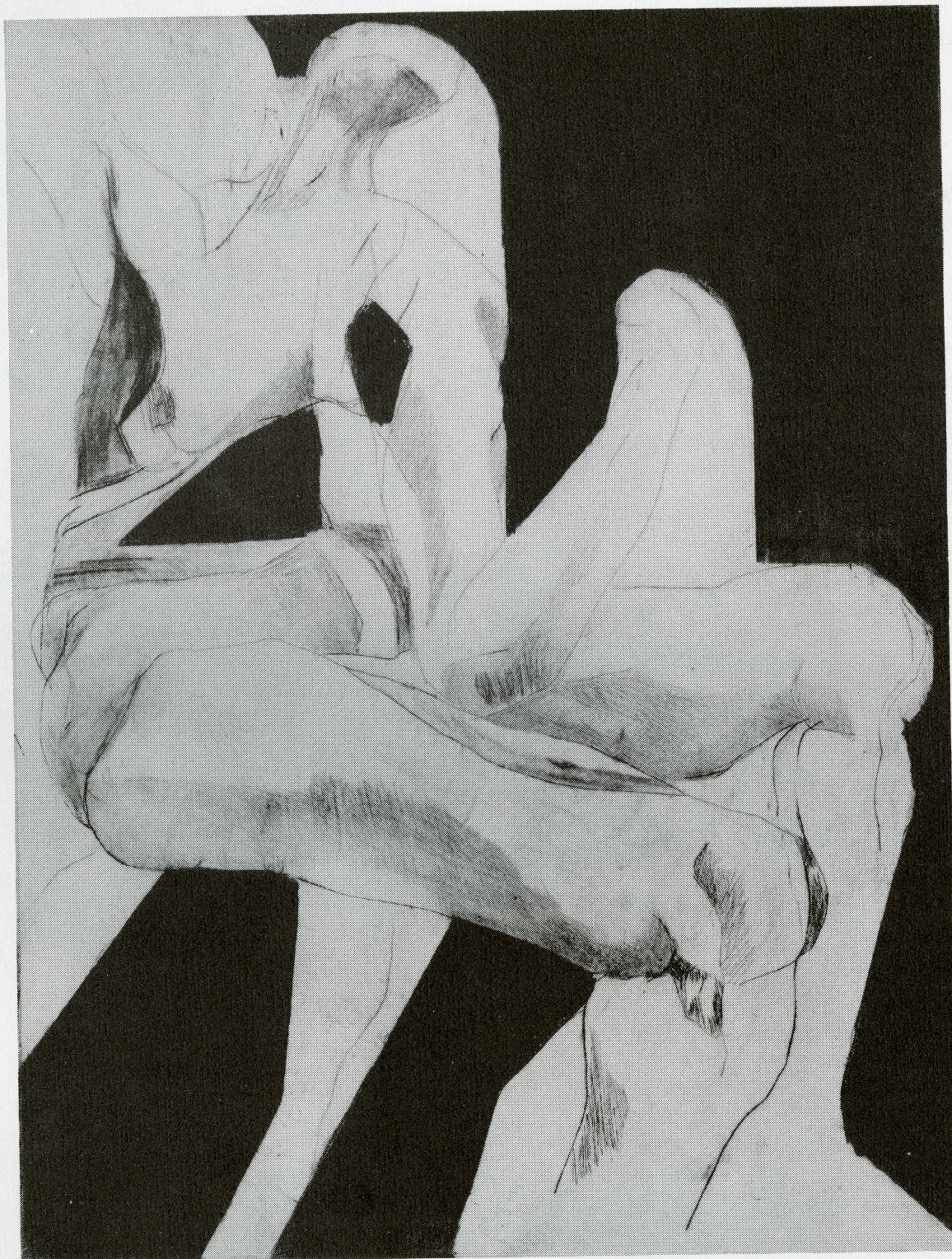
22 SPIDER OF THE WIND

Robed in the black widower's cloak
without the hourglass of fire orange
I spin my webs in the moist morning.
To the wind
I throw my crystal cords.
Time cannot trap me;
my threads caress the wind
becoming part of eternity's swiftiness.

The light, light zephyrs hold me up
in the confusion of the emerald blades.
Such contradictions they belong together
but twisted and contorted
apart they grow.
My fragile body cannot hold them.
My spinneret cannot knit love.
Seeking to touch the sun alone
the purple thistle shall crush their greed.

I am the black widow's mate
The dark shadows of my lovers lie in the grass.
Through loving
they have sought to poison me while dreaming,
impale me on a single twisted blade
to be cast to earth as dying grass,
but they cannot imprison me,
my legs are swifter than deceit.
The light, light zephyrs hold me.

As your orange blackness spins in my web
again I fear the silkened pattern
but wait for your knitting in my loneliness
for still my spindly legs are swift.
Pattern with the wind
and we shall fight the purple thistle,
knit love in despair.
The blades cannot hold us;
time cannot trap us.



"The Lament"

A. Kaip

Chuck Hanke -

23 THE RETURN OF HOFFMAN

Pale Medea

Waiting on the banks of the Tigre
Waiting for the return of Hoffman
Warrior without equal
Conqueror of the seven cities
El dor, Somar, El tabor, Lardon,
Mygotha, Symathon, and An alon.
Black as the Syrian night.
He marched with red fury in his eyes;
He marched with many thousand
Archers, horsemen, henchmen.
Over the white mountains he comes
Bringing the spoils of a year's march.
Home he comes to pale Medea
Who has waited sometimes in tears,
Waiting the return of mighty Hoffman.
News had reached her
He returns.
"My lord returns," she cried.
Tearfully she has waited many nights.
"He returns," she quivers with joy.
As night falls she can see
The glimmer of campfires near
The base of the mountains.
Her heart leaps.

George Inzer -

24 LINES FOUND ON A WALL IN BEDLAM

I am the Way,
He said,
I am the Christ.
Believing,
I murdered in His Name.

I sat in a forest
Revering Nature
Loving
At last, I left
And crawled onto the asphalt...
Why was my animal beast
Pointing a gun at me?

Morning brings the dusty conquerors
home.

Fine treasures flow beneath her
window.

Moans of wounded soldiers fill the air,
Clamour of horses clopping the pavement
Creaks of cart wheels
Clanking of armour
Cries of happiness and despair.
Down the line of march comes
A golden wagon.
Beautiful it flashes in the moon and sun.
Carved on its sides are the stories of the
battles.

Well trained guards escort the shrine.
Medea's heart leaps with pride.
The soldiers are solemn,
Great and heavy is the wagon.
From the four corners and a central spire
On the wagon fly black flags.
Behind the wagon march the flags of the
generals.

Rhimfeld, the second in command,
Stops beneath her window.
Hoffman is dead

I spied a bird
Regarding me strangely
His heart beat in his breast.
I stretched forth a finger
For him to use as a haven.
He gladly accepted.
Stupid bird.



Gene Jonson

The world has nothing for me.
He cried as he ran down the alley
He stumbled over the garbage
And lay there muttering
The world has nothing for me...
I will destroy it.

The vision
In my desert...
I watch the oasis, not moving
Knowing, had I reached for it...
The sun hangs on the horizon
Is it the East or the West?

Why did you do it?
I asked the young man.
Why did you build your own
special desert?
I did it because I believed
And what do you believe
He stared at me vacantly.

John Lansden -

25 WHERE I HAVE BEEN

I have been down
to the lonely sea
Where waves break
white and steaming,
And watched silently
the rushing water
Wash across the sand
I've pushed aside.

I have been to the
still growing forests
Where the yellowing
leaf tumbles down,
And beheld the tall
trees tremble quietly
As the darkness rushed
onward without sound.

And I have been to
the forbidden land
Where lonely men
hide their souls
And with them wept.
in choral airs
As sleep closed round
my shadowed mind.

26 THE MILL (FROM MEMORY)

Across the Kansas prairies blows
A gentle breeze from Eastern lands,
Pushing the yellow seas to roll.
I in my mind's boat set sail
Till the old mill land emerges
(Looms in the distance as a fort,
A mound of limestone orderly arrayed.)
It's there in solitude among shadows
Watching the seeds of some aged plant,
Long dead, growing in cracks, they live
To reap the sun ray as it flames
Upon the parched and acrid ground,
Supporting a forgotten fragment of time.
I perched on crusted stone to let
The silent thoughts ring among cogs
Corroded from merciless time and damp;
And listen to the water far below
Groan as it leans against the wheel.
It seeps and squirts among the cracks
And rusted holes in age pitted metals
To spring forth the other side at length
In little swirls and whirlpools, sucking
Some hapless fallen creature to its death.
The hours pass in contemplation
And shadows wrap round my human form,
Time has gone while others wait for me.
Sullenly I set my sails to leave,
This desolate place that haunts my soul,
And stand by stern to watch the land
Sink beneath the yellow waving seas,
Till there's not a trace of it or me.

27 WHATEVER HAPPENED TO NICE OLD MR. MCDONALD?

Mr. McDonald was a very neat man. His three-room apartment was immaculate--the drab walls were fingerprintless gray, the living room rug, a faded dirtless beige. The few pieces of furniture (some of which he had inherited, some he bought at a second hand store, and some, it seemed, he had always had) were perpetually dustless and polished. Yes, Mr. McDonald kept very good care of everything he owned. And that wasn't difficult because there wasn't very much.

There was the television he had inherited from his brother Joe. It didn't have a picture tube. But no one knew that.

There was his chest-of-drawers which held assorted pajamas, underwear, and a few shirts; these too were once Joe's. In the closet hung four pairs of pants, one tweed coat and an overcoat for walks in the frigid New Hartford winters.

His refrigerator was vintage 1950 and it held what food his conscience would allow him to buy; milk, a few eggs, cheese, sliced ham, and chocolate ice cream. Every Sunday night after church he would go to an all night store and carefully count out the exact amount in change for the ice cream. Then he would eat two scoops a night, measuring so that he would not run out until Saturday.

It seemed to Mr. McDonald that he had always lived like this, in the same apartment overlooking the hardware store. And a great deal of his life he had. This had been his home since his mother had died twenty years ago. He had retired shortly after that (working at the hardware store had always bored him, and besides whoever knew his mother had so much money?). His life had fallen into a neat routine; sell, rise, polish, sweep, wash, eat, walk, gossip with Mrs. Hagarty down the hall, eat chocolate ice cream, read the Bible, and sleep. And he prayed--every morning and every evening. He prayed to God to please let him live at least to be 100. For if Mr. McDonald worried about anything other than running out of chocolate ice cream, it was dying. He would not die. He absolutely refused. He would continue living neatly, cleanly, antiseptically, alone, forever.

He had never married. What woman was as good as Mother anyway? His drawn face frowned when someone asked the inevitable question, "When did your wife pass on?" What wife? What had he ever needed a wife for? Mother kept care of him. She taught him to work, clean, mend. He certainly wasn't an animal; sex had never interested him. In fact the word repulsed him; he had never wanted that sort of thing. He hated women, except for Mother. They had been happy for forty years. What other woman could have been as fine a Christian as his mother?

Today started exactly as a thousand other yesterdays. He got out of bed, ate oatmeal, took two vitamins, and got dressed. Today he would dust. As he began polishing the frame of his one mirror, he glanced at his own reflection.

Was that really him? Looking as old as mother did when she died? Wrinkled skin like yellow leather. That was not the real Mr. McDonald. He was still young with places to go and people to see. But Mr. McDonald could not think of one place to go or one friend to visit. He didn't really even care for Mrs. Hagarty (but if he was in a wicked mood he would go knock on her door and she would tell him who was sleeping with who in their apartments). He was feeling a little dizzy. Perhaps some fresh air, he thought. He put on the overcoat and slowly walked downstairs and into the brisk weather.

Nothing much was going on. The hardware store was doing a heavy business selling snow chains, for the sky was gray and foreboding.

Mr. McDonald walked for two blocks. He entered a drugstore and bought a pack of Juicy Fruit. Then he went into the public restroom next door.

It smelled of urine and sweat and filth. Mr. McDonald looked to see if anyone was around. Satisfied, he smiled and reached into his pocket for a magic marker. Then quite carefully and neatly, he wrote "F---" in capital letters on the wall.

II

Mr. McDonald was heading back toward his apartment when he saw her--a very big-boned, tall girl.

She watched him as he passed with a cold yet intense stare. Mr. McDonald felt dizzy again. His face flushed. He hurried home, locked the door and shut the blinds.

The dizziness passed but he could not calm himself. He decided to read the newspaper. The front page was filled with stories concerning nuns and monks burning themselves in Southeast Asia. Mr. McDonald was shocked. Suicide was so stupid, so ridiculous, so absurd. He would not lower himself to read an article glorifying it.

The news had taken his mind off the girl. He went to bed early but his dreams were haunted by the image of huge eyes watching him. Crying "I won't go, I won't go," Mr. McDonald was pulled into a muddy river by an old woman.

He awoke the next morning, thankful for a new day and that the nightmares were gone. He cleaned the kitchen for awhile. At a quarter past two he sat down to rest. At twenty past two, there was a knock at the door. A steady persistent knock.

"I'm coming, I'm coming!"

The knocking did not cease.

"What on earth," he muttered, jerking open the door.

"Hello, Mr. McDonald," said the girl.

Mr. McDonald's face felt strangely warm.

"What do you want?" He was surprised at the fright in his voice.

The girl did not answer. She walked over to his favorite armchair and sat down. She turned her eyes on him and Mr. McDonald saw that they were black, No pupils were visible, only velvet blackness.

Then she began to laugh; softly at first, then loudly.

"Don't you know who I am, why I'm here?"

She laughed again.

"Don't you like me Mr. McDonald?"

He could not answer. The words would not come. The strange girl was laughing no longer.

Mr. McDonald had to sit down. He was feeling dizzy again. He sat and stared back at the girl. She wore a white silk blouse and an ankle-length black organdy skirt; it was 1965, December, and this girl wore an ankle-length organdy skirt. Her hands were large, her fingers extremely long. Sitting in the light as she was, her hair seemed luminous. It was a color caught between blond and gray and it hung to her waist, thick, uncombed.

But it was her eyes that bothered Mr. McDonald the most. She was strange looking enough, but those eyes... Her skin was pallid, making them seem even larger.

"Mr. McDonald," she broke the strained silence. "I'd like some chocolate ice cream."

"Now I don't know who you are, but get out and stop that laughing!"

His heart was leaping. Screams. Pounding--God, who is she. That girl! Was she a girl? She had the look of timelessness. Perhaps she is fifteen, he thought, perhaps she is fifteen hundred. The thought made him even more ill at ease.

"Dear Mr. McDonald. Don't be frightened of me."

She was calm now, speaking more gently, "My what a lovely picture of your mother."

"Did you know my mother?" he cried. Ah, this was it.

"I know your mother." She laughed again and silent, walked out the door.

A week passed, then two. Mr. McDonald's nightmares still came every night but he had not seen the girl since that day. Until Saturday, when a familiar, persistent knock came at the door. This time Mr. McDonald did not have to answer it. The girl entered by herself.

"I've come for you, Mr. McDonald. It's been time for quite awhile."

"Get out! Are you mad? Get out!" He was yelling now, but no one heard. And suddenly Mr. McDonald realized he was alone. And he was frightened, more frightened than when mother died. He had never been so terrified or so alone.

"I'm calling the police if you don't leave. Now!"

The girl did not move. She stared and laughed.

III

From his window, Mr. McDonald saw the police arrive. He walked as fast as he could to the first floor to meet them and explain about the idiot who had forced her way into his room and would not leave. Two officers went up the stairs and a third remained to calm Mr. McDonald.

In five minutes they were back exchanging amused, slightly irritated glances with the third officer.

"Sir, did the woman come out this way?" they asked.

"No, wasn't she there? She had to be there." Mr. McDonald would not believe them.

"Sir, we looked quite thoroughly. There's no one there...perhaps, ah...perhaps, sir, you fell asleep and were dreaming or...well. We are busy, sir, good afternoon."

Mr. McDonald's first impulse was to run, but where?

He climbed the stairs and opened the door, slowly. The apartment had never looked so empty, so cold, so lonely. He went into the bathroom to take an aspirin. Suddenly, he felt someone staring at him in a cold stare piercing his brain.

"Hello, said the girl, "you know now, Mr. McDonald, you understand now, Mr. McDonald."

And she began to laugh and she would not stop. She would not stop. And the laughter grew and echoed on the tiles. She would not stop.

Mr. McDonald's hand did not find the aspirin bottle. Instead it found the razor. The cold blade felt soothing as it dug into his flesh. His head swirled. The girl laughed.

He knew now. Yes, he knew now. A thousand antiseptic yesterdays crushed him. The warm red life rushed from his neck, his throat. His head swirled. The girl laughed. He leaned forward to keep the blood flowing into the sink and not on the white tiles. For, even in death, Mr. McDonald was a very neat man.

